

Does the family benefit everyone?

AQA A Level Sociology 7192 • Families & Households • L009 • v1.0

CONNECT & CHECK | SHARE | PRESENT | APPLY | RECALL & REVIEW

Connect & Check → Share → Present → Apply → Recall & Review. Explain the key concepts, apply them accurately to the supplied case and answer the enquiry with a qualified, evidence-led judgement. Use fictional examples; no personal family disclosure is required.

Recall and connect

Missed the preparation? Name one of Parsons's specialised functions. Primary socialisation or stabilisation of adult personalities. Give one historical challenge to a simple extended-to-nuclear transition. Nuclear households existed in parts of Western Europe before industrialisation. Why is a functional claim different from a claim of equal benefit? An activity may support social continuity while its benefits or costs are distributed unequally.

Retrieve the previous lesson, then record a view you can revisit.

R1

Name one of Parsons's specialised functions.

R2

Give one historical challenge to a simple extended-to-nuclear transition.

R3

Starting judgement: "If a family activity supports society, everyone must benefit equally." Explain your view.

Three separate claims

Functionalists direct attention to contributions such as socialisation and material cooperation. Evaluation should identify the exact claim being tested. Showing that an activity contributes to social order does not demonstrate that one family form is necessary, that the contribution occurs in every case, or that everyone benefits equally. These propositions require different evidence.

D1

Distinguish contribution, necessity and equal benefit.

D2

What would a functionalist find useful about regular family support?

Benefits and burdens

Consider who provides support and what it costs them. One member may receive emotional care while another loses rest or paid-work opportunities through providing it. A family can offer affection and material security alongside unequal workloads. Feminist approaches question gendered burdens; conflict approaches ask whose interests an arrangement serves. Neither requires assuming that every family is identical.

D3

Explain an opportunity cost of unpaid care.

D4

Why can affection coexist with inequality?

A fair test of a theory

A strong evaluation first reconstructs the claim accurately, then applies a relevant challenge. Evidence of school socialisation challenges exclusivity more directly than the existence of family socialisation. Evidence of unequal unpaid work challenges equal benefit. A single fictional case illustrates a question; it cannot estimate prevalence or settle the validity of a whole theoretical tradition.

D5

Give an alternative institution and identify exactly which claim it challenges.

D6

Explain what makes an evaluation relevant rather than a list of criticisms.

Apply the evidence

Fictional case: In the Brook household, adults pool income and help a child with learning. Jo supplies most unpaid care and turns down a training course because replacement care is unavailable. Kit receives support after stressful shifts. Both describe affection, but Jo wants care shared more evenly. A community club also teaches cooperation. The account describes this invented situation only.



Observe the visible activity and identify what further evidence is needed. This photograph also appears on slide 19.

A1

Describe what is visible in the photograph. What further evidence would be needed to apply this lesson's concepts?

Apply the case evidence

Fictional case: In the Brook household, adults pool income and help a child with learning. Jo supplies most unpaid care and turns down a training course because replacement care is unavailable. Kit receives support after stressful shifts. Both describe affection, but Jo wants care shared more evenly. A community club also teaches cooperation. The account describes this invented situation only.

A2

Explain one contribution and one uneven effect in the Brook case.

A3

Which case detail challenges necessity, and which challenges equal benefit?

Optional scaffold: Name the concept → select a precise case detail → explain the connection → state what the detail cannot establish. Rehearse aloud, then write independently.

Challenge and judge

Make a precise claim, connect it to evidence and state its limits.

C1

Give a qualified judgement on the usefulness of functionalism for this case.

C2

Improve: “Jo does more care, so families have no useful functions.”

Prove and improve

Complete retrieval, then write independently for eight minutes.

P1

Explain two criticisms of functionalist explanations of the family. [6 marks]

P2

Identify the two points in your response. Improve one missing explanation or example.

P3

Return to R3. Give a qualified judgement and identify one piece of evidence still needed.

Prepare for Lesson 10

Read the three short passages and answer the preparation questions.

Engels: property and inheritance

Engels linked the development of particular family arrangements to private property and the transmission of wealth through male lines. This is a historical Marxist argument about ownership and class relations. It should not be presented as a proven universal account of all family origins. Its analytical question remains useful: how can transfers within families help preserve the advantages of property owners?

Two connected concepts

Capitalism: An economic system centred on private ownership and production for profit.

Bourgeoisie: In Marxist theory, the class owning major means of production.

A question to bring

Explain how inheritance may reproduce a property-owning advantage. Assets passed to children give them access to resources others may lack. Ownership can persist across generations even when heirs did not create the original wealth.

F1

Summarise the main idea in the first passage in one or two sentences.

F2

Define capitalism and give an original fictional example.

F3

What evidence would you need to test the opening claim? Retrieve two current-lesson concepts tomorrow and next week.

Retrieval check for self study

Complete before the extended response. Cover the key while answering. One mark per correct answer; total 6. Correct insecure ideas and retry tomorrow. Extended writing needs teacher review.

Q1

Which meaning best fits function?

A A contribution an activity or institution makes to a wider social system. B Support for others' needs without direct payment. C A claim that something exists across all relevant cases.

Q2

Which meaning best fits unpaid care?

A A claim that an outcome requires a particular arrangement. B Support for others' needs without direct payment. C The situations or cases to which an explanation applies.

Q3

Which meaning best fits conflict?

A Another arrangement that may perform a similar contribution. B A case that challenges a general claim. C Opposed interests or struggles over resources and power.

Q4

Which meaning best fits counterexample?

A A case that challenges a general claim. B An effect that disrupts a system or harms its operation. C Support for others' needs without direct payment.

Q5

A school teaches cooperation. What does this directly challenge?

A The claim that only families can teach cooperation. B The claim that families ever teach cooperation. C The question can be answered from a person's appearance alone.

Q6

What can the supplied fictional case establish?

A It proves what all UK families do. B It illustrates a mechanism to examine with further evidence. C It establishes a causal law without further evidence.

Self marking key

Q1: A. Q2: B. Q3: C. Q4: A. Q5: A. Q6: B.